



## Section V – Driving Situations and Conditions

### A. Driving in Reduced Visibility

Driving in reduced visibility situations is more difficult than “normal” driving and requires additional concentration and preparation. Low visibility driving can encompass a variety of situations, but it is most commonly associated with nighttime driving and driving in fog.

When driving in reduced visibility situations, use the road edge lines or the right side of the road as a guide. You may not see highway signs until too late. Yellow pavement markings should never be on your right side, but always on your left side. Yellow is used to divide opposing roadway traffic and indicate the left travel edge of the roadway. White pavement markings denote the right travel edge of the roadway, as well as traffic traveling in the same direction.

#### Headlight Use

LIGHTS  
ON WHEN  
USING  
WIPERS

Knowing when and how to use your headlights is critical for safe driving. Headlights are not only used by drivers to help them see in low visibility situations, they are also helpful in identifying your vehicle to oncoming traffic.

#### Basic Rules for Headlight Usage

- When driving, you must turn on your headlights anytime there is not enough light to clearly see at least 1,000 feet ahead of your vehicle.
- Key times to use headlights are nighttime, foggy conditions and stormy weather.
- Maryland law requires that you turn on your headlights when you are using your windshield wipers in inclement weather.

### Low Beam Headlight vs. High Beam Headlight Usage

Below are some guidelines on headlight settings:

#### Low Beam

Use low beams when:

- operating your vehicle in normal driving situations, such as driving at night on a highway or roadway with streetlights;
- driving in fog, rain, snow, etc;
- entering a tunnel or construction area. While not required by law in all areas, this increases visibility to other motorists and construction workers.

#### High Beam

Use high beams on open roads, which are not lighted by streetlights, in order to see persons or vehicles ahead. Be aware, you must:

- change to low beam at least 500 feet before meeting oncoming vehicles.
- change to low beam when following a vehicle at a distance of 300 feet or less.

### B. Driving at Night

Night driving creates a different set of problems for drivers. Driving at night is more hazardous and more difficult than daytime driving making it more difficult to judge distance and traveling speed of other vehicles. You can see only as far as your headlights allow. Risks increase at night due to visibility problems, which make it difficult to clearly see the path of travel and determine the actions of other drivers.

Below are some simple suggestions to follow when driving at night:

- make sure to use your headlights and follow the suggestions for when to use high beams;